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# Post COVID Schools

**NOVEMBER** Edition -  
Post School Opening  
Edu-COVID Series



# NOVEMBER

Education systems continue, as another surge of the pandemic remains a threat. However, there are very good practices and remarkable achievements being made in the fields, giving us rays of hope and proving that humans can adapt and innovate.

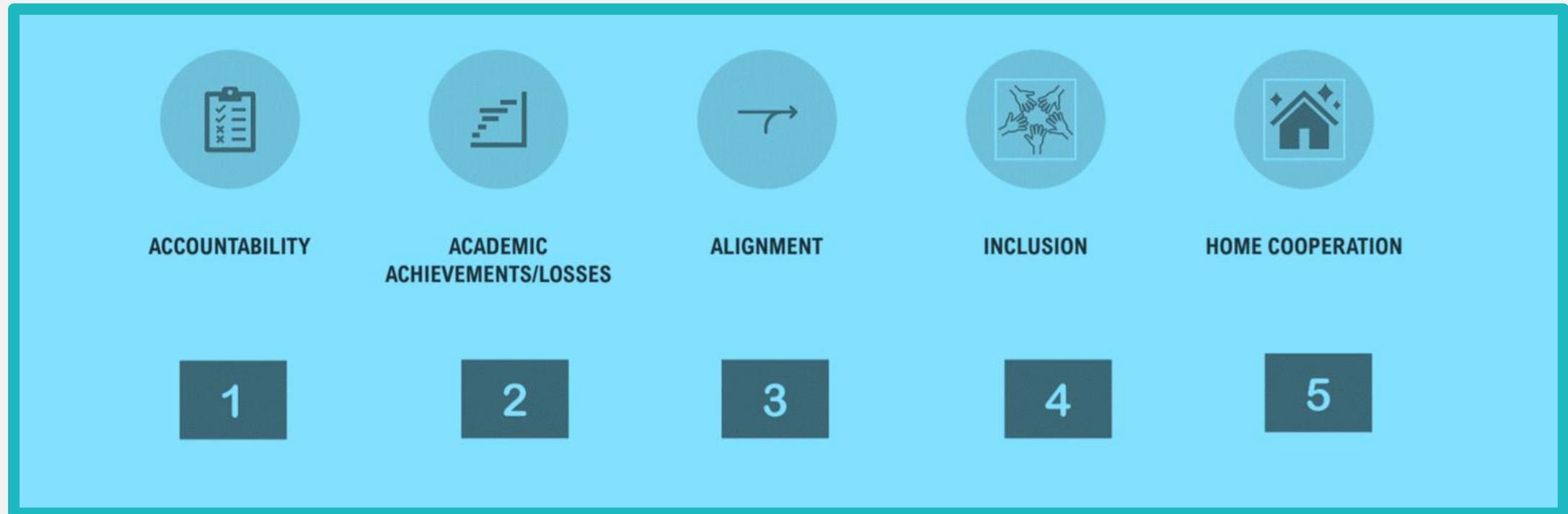
Thousands of educators and leaders worldwide have shown that resilience can be utilized in such circumstances, digging deep into our core, collaborating to build capacities, and brainstorming to create new paths through this pandemic.

This November edition presents more about what schools can focus on to navigate into this second phase – tips, strategies, and methods to make our sailing less rough.

“Grades 1-12 affected by the closures could expect some 3 percent lower income over their entire lifetimes”

(Hanushek & Woessmann, 2020)

# Reminder 3: Focus Urgency



These were fully explained in Post COVID School (Version 2) from the Edu-COVID Series, published in August 2020.

[www.orbitsdevelopment.com](http://www.orbitsdevelopment.com)

## More on the Five Focus Urgency Areas

- Tips and Strategies -



# Accountability

Focus Urgency

I





Stage	Study Time Range
Kindergarten	20 to 40 minutes
1 and 2	40 to 60 minutes
3 and 4	60 to 80 minutes
5 and 6	80 to 100 minutes
6 and above	100 to 200 minutes

**Suggested Time Range:** This denotes ranges, due to learners' cognitive differences and transitions/rest time.

Administrations are advised to keep a watching eye on small-scaled interactions, such as conversations between a parent and teacher, a teacher and a learner, and so on, so that nothing is neglected. During these times, when the majority is overwhelmed, errors of neglect and anxiety can easily occur.

This list adds to the previous points in relation to accountability:

1. Are leaders closely monitoring study time for each grade level? (It differs from a country's system to another).
2. Are leaders monitoring partnerships for diversity and improvement?
3. Do leaders have a clear and fair policy for handling staff members testing COVID positive?
4. Are leaders monitoring learning to provide intervention to teachers, immediately, when needed?
5. Are leaders providing substitute modes and/or material for learners who are at risk?
6. Are leaders working continuously to ensure adequate resources, either privately or through funds?

# Academic Achievements / Losses

Focus Urgency

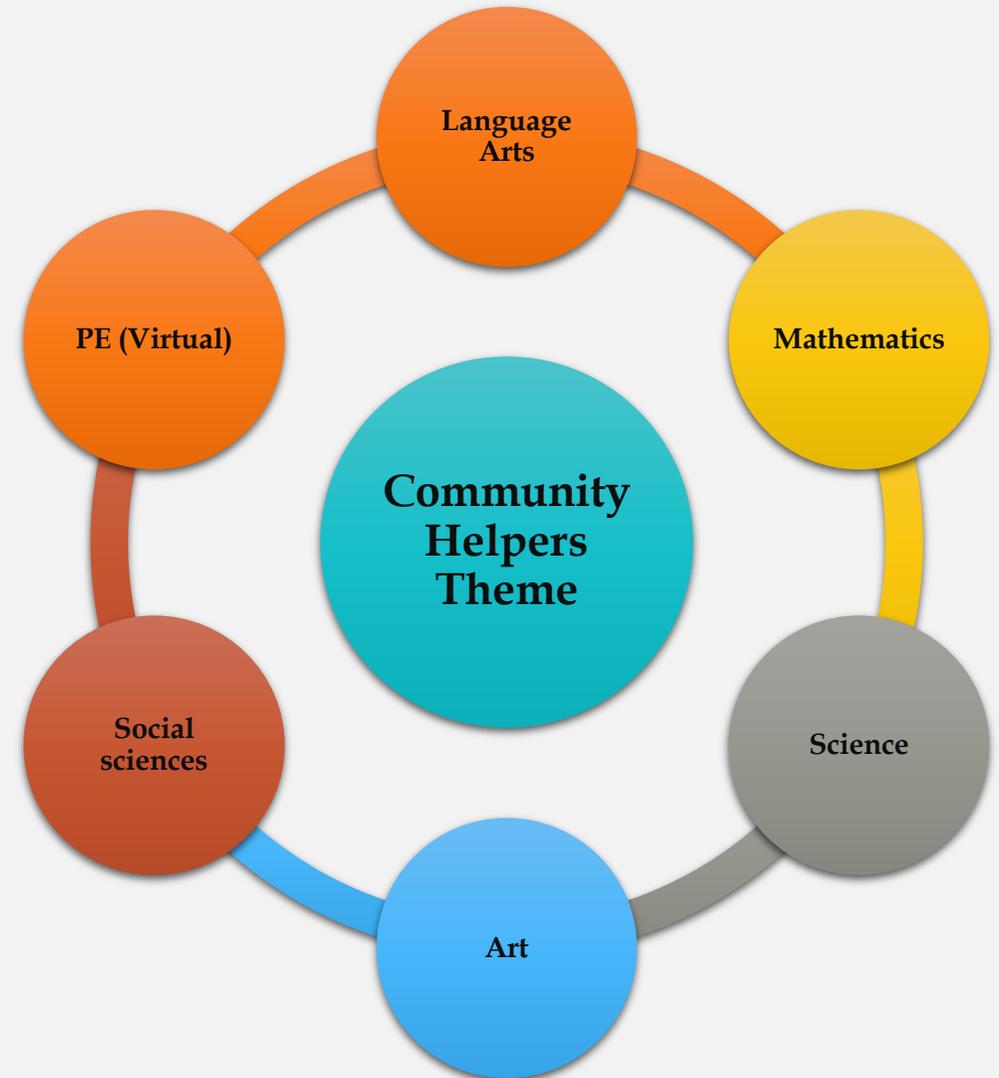
II



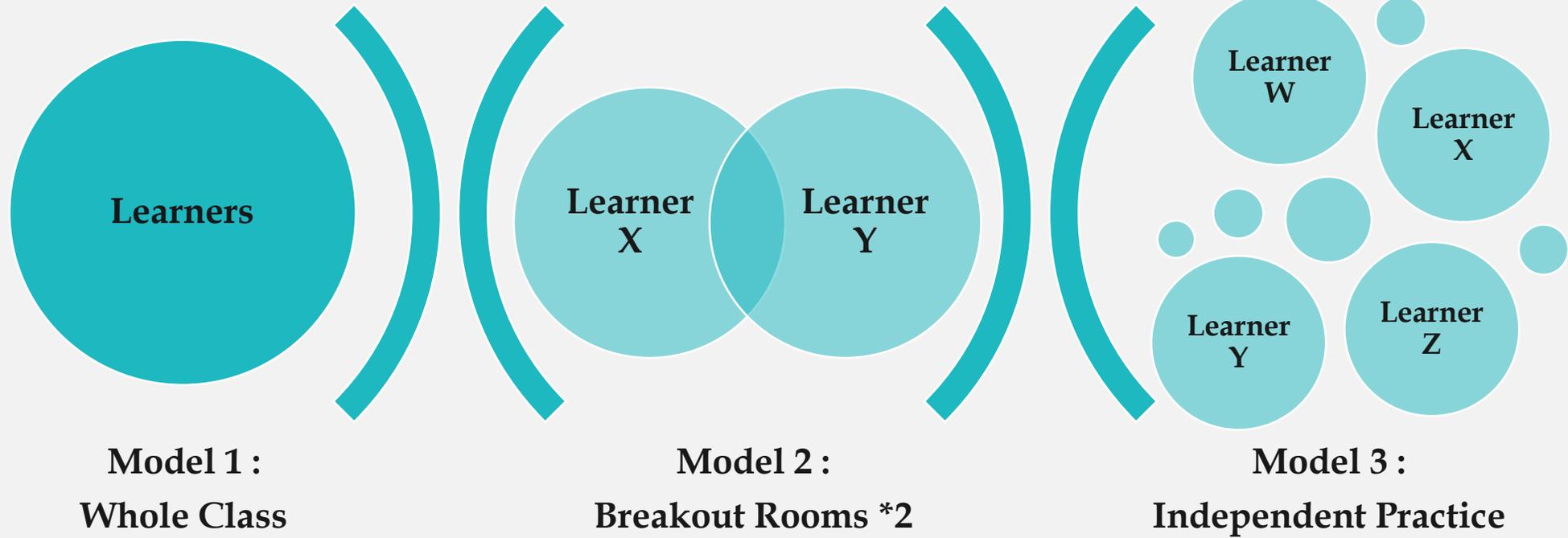
# Recommendations

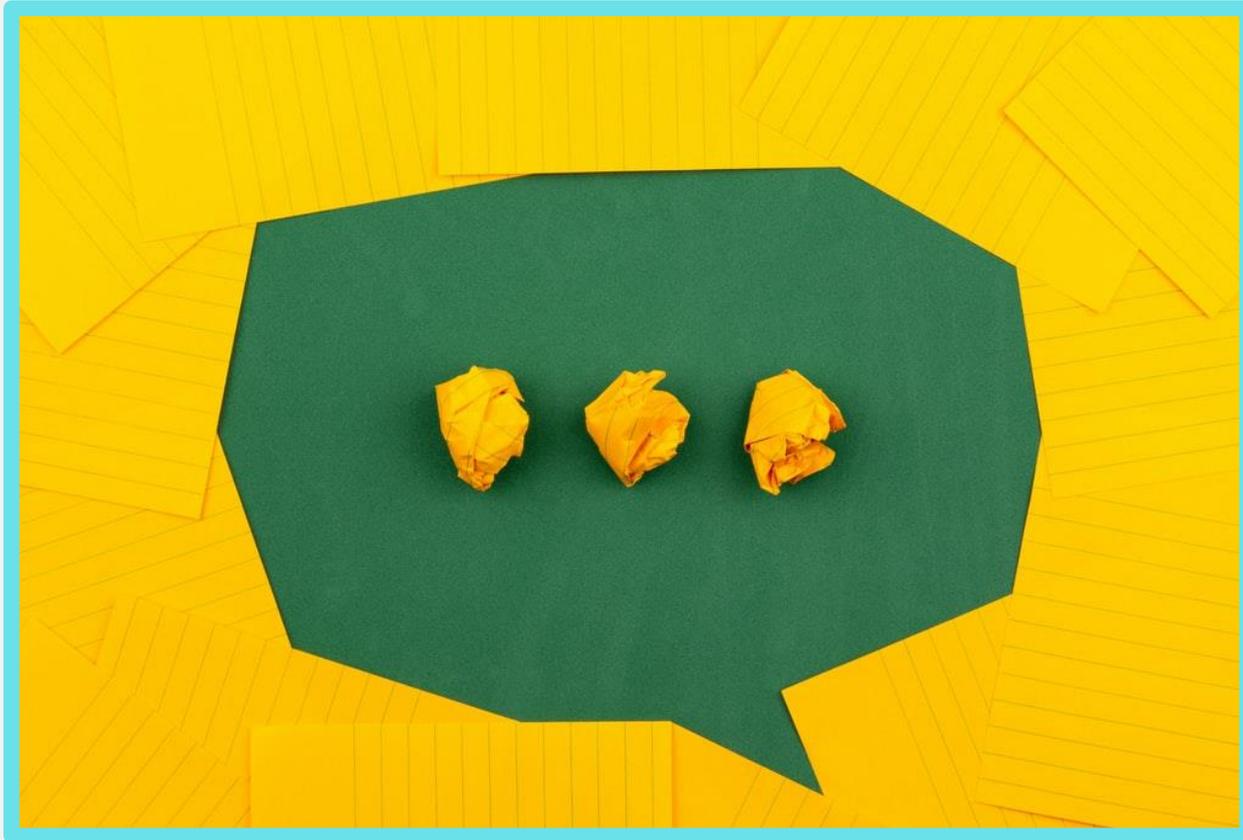
1. Integrating themes and coordinating assignments and projects can play a vital role in carrying out curriculum plans and assessment methodologies. Unifying themes:

- a. solidifies standards and connects them
- b. teaches in a more purposeful manner
- c. creates a sense of excitement for learners, as they discover new themes every week or every other week
- d. saves time and effort for both teacher and learner
- e. can be sculpted to fit any grade level



# Learners' Interactions





Collecting **Feedback**  
and using it to design and  
redesign

- Integrating **SEL** -  
Social-emotional learning  
components to all subjects



# Languages



**Comprehension** is a fundamental skill set to learn. Strategies are important. However, focusing on reading should be the focus. Bringing in the knowledge into meaningful discourse can strengthen comprehension.

Asking questions is the first step after and during reading. There are always a voice and a message of the author. Knowing this builds a bridge towards full understanding.

Teacher read aloud is great in creating suspense and curiosity, as learners will attach more and more meaning until the full picture is formed.

Asking learners to underline or circle interesting information or information that is not yet clear directs understanding. Annotating is also powerful.

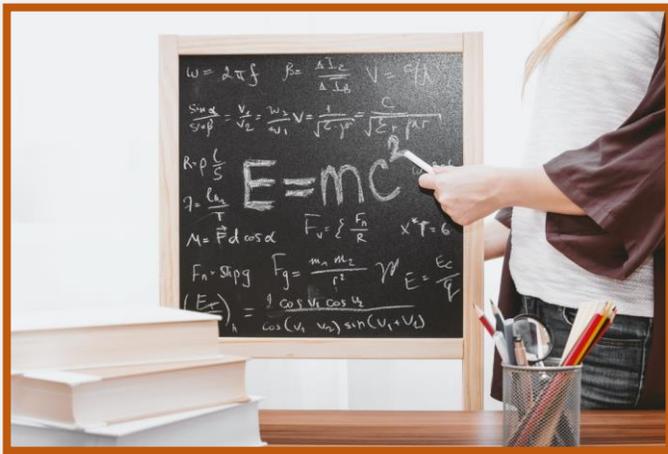
Creating a “Headline” or the “Aha” or any other phrase chosen to denote a main idea.

Drawing attention to the author. There can be no text without the author. Narrative writing is not only genre. Checking multiple types of genres and validating information are fundamental in comprehension.

Asking learners to pause and retell ensures deep learning.

Selecting characters and playing the role or redesigning the role-actions, reactions, decisions, etc.. extends learning.

# Science



Creating illustrations of the content learned takes science into a new level. K-6 learners can make a collage and short videos or ask learners to make theirs in a video in the easiest way possible.

Science, with its long list of academic vocabulary, needs to be deeply understood and one of the best ways to show understanding is to communicate it.

Regarding the huge load of information in science subjects, whether it is elementary, middle school, or high school, it is important that the focus is on thinking skills (thinking like a scientist), rather than focus on facts. There should be grade level progress, and this can happen only with authentic growth, rather than passing quick fact-based assessments.

## Social Studies



One of the most effective ways to teach social studies is through project-based learning. Conducting those PBL steps, starting from the driving question, can trigger long and deep discussions.

To make it more engaging with higher levels, teachers can start a Facebook Private Group (Privacy ensured) and the teacher invites learners. Such live sessions are very effective because they trigger curiosity and encourage social interaction. Such activities, though, may need approval from the administration and notification to inform parents about the timing of such LIVE sessions. Few learners might use this an excuse to be on Facebook during their free time, on the pretense of social studies LIVE session.

# Art



Asking learners to work according to themes is very exciting. Teachers can collect paintings or drawings and form murals (in school playgrounds as most teachers still work from schools) that tell stories of learners during COVID. This will be very interesting after all schools reopen and COVID is under control, making the murals living memories. Murals are big so they symbolize the global scale.

Another exciting exercise that learners can do is finding the missing item or person within a picture that another learner draws – surely these will be about specific themes that they have discussed before. Finding and adding these items through cut-outs is a fun activity and encourages collaboration and social thinking.

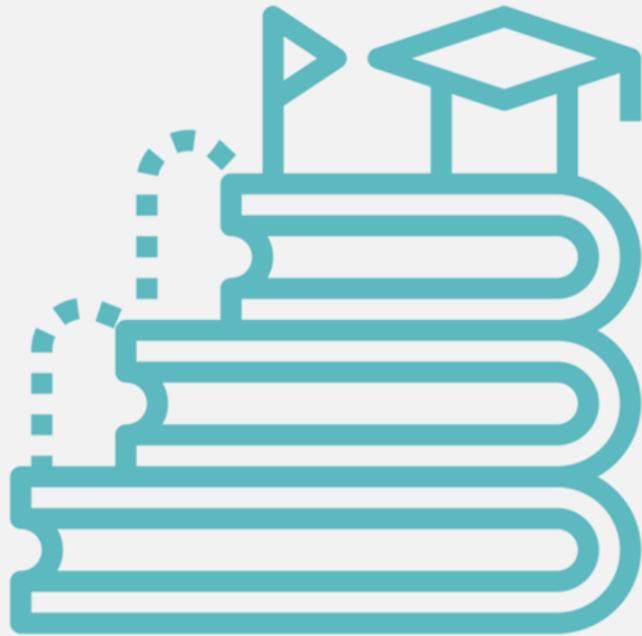
# Alignment

Focus Urgency

III



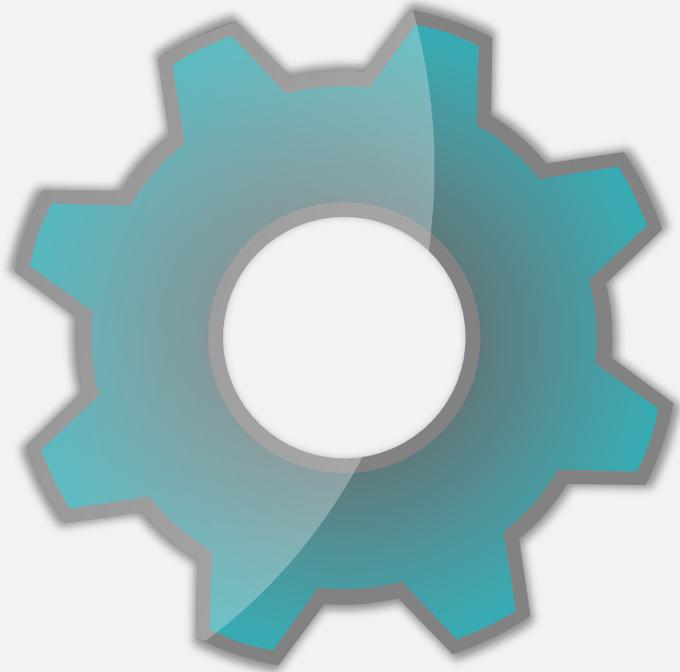
# Alignment to Curriculum



Curriculum is being redesigned so that it fits within the time frames and the setting of learning. To ensure proper alignment to curriculum, few questions are asked:

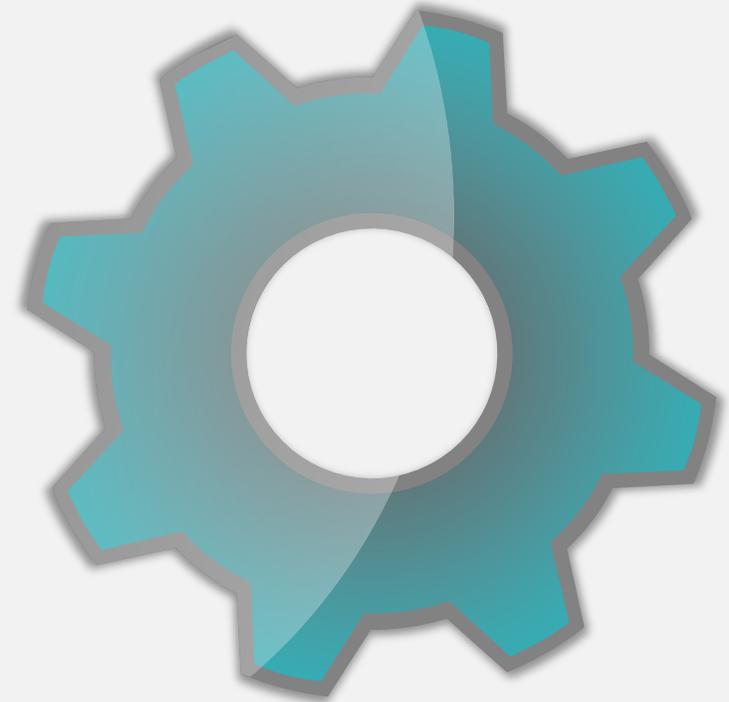
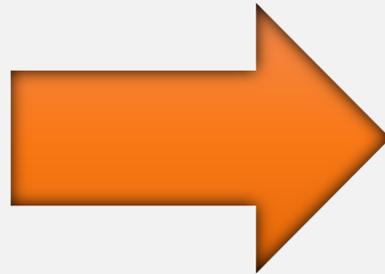
1. Are there intervention plans being implemented by intervention teachers?
2. Are teachers monitoring notetaking – their learners’ and theirs? (This may be time-consuming, but it is worth the effort because it keeps fundamentals always seen, and therefore, handled)
3. Are the right types of digital resources being used to achieve learning goals?
4. Are modifications being done on a weekly and daily basis, when necessary?
5. Are teachers monitoring their higher order thinking skills utilized every day?

# Learning Path



## Learning **Goals/Objectives**

- I can learn to .....
- I can plan to .....
- I can create .....
- I can design .....



## Learning **Outcomes/Criteria**

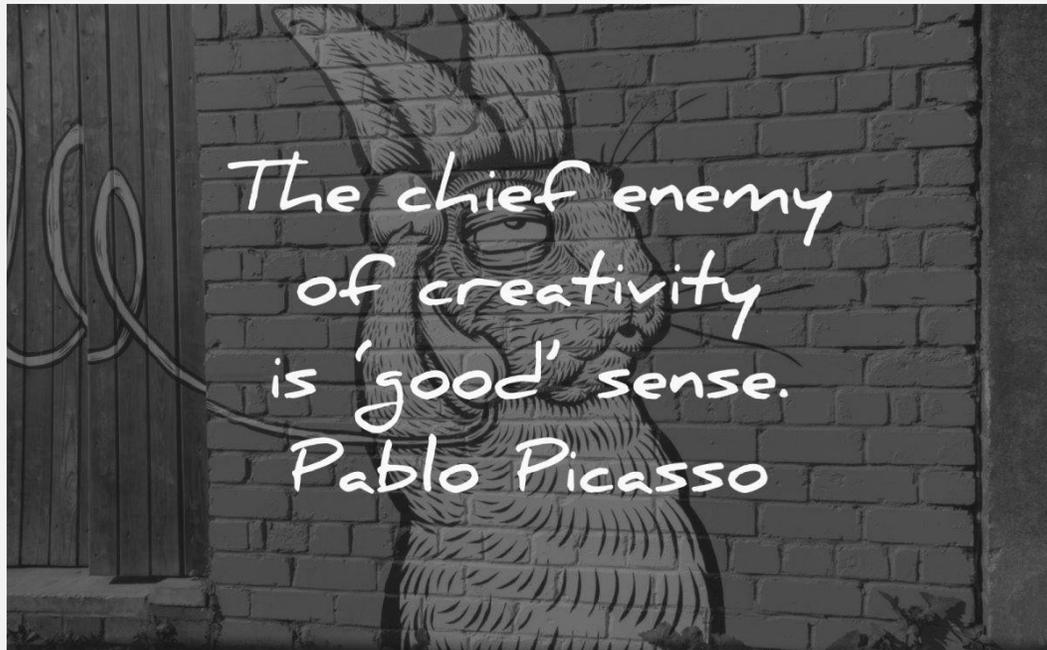
- Now I know that .....
- Now I know why .....
- Now I know how .....
- Now I know when .....

# Inclusion

Focus Urgency

IV





Accepting various forms of learner intervention should not be a threat to the teaching experience. It is advised that teachers allow in certain situations some actions that may not be related to the session itself. This demands dexterity from the teacher as to know what could add to the class discussion or general path for learning.

For example, if a learner asks a question that is seen as far from the session, redirecting it to the session is much smarter than just stopping the child from speaking. Another example is, if a child uses technology at a certain moment that is not as expected, in other words, might be outside the box, such as doodling on the virtual whiteboard, or asking to go to breakout rooms. Letting such things happen and investing in the learner's sense of curiosity may serve the lesson, rather than disrupt it.

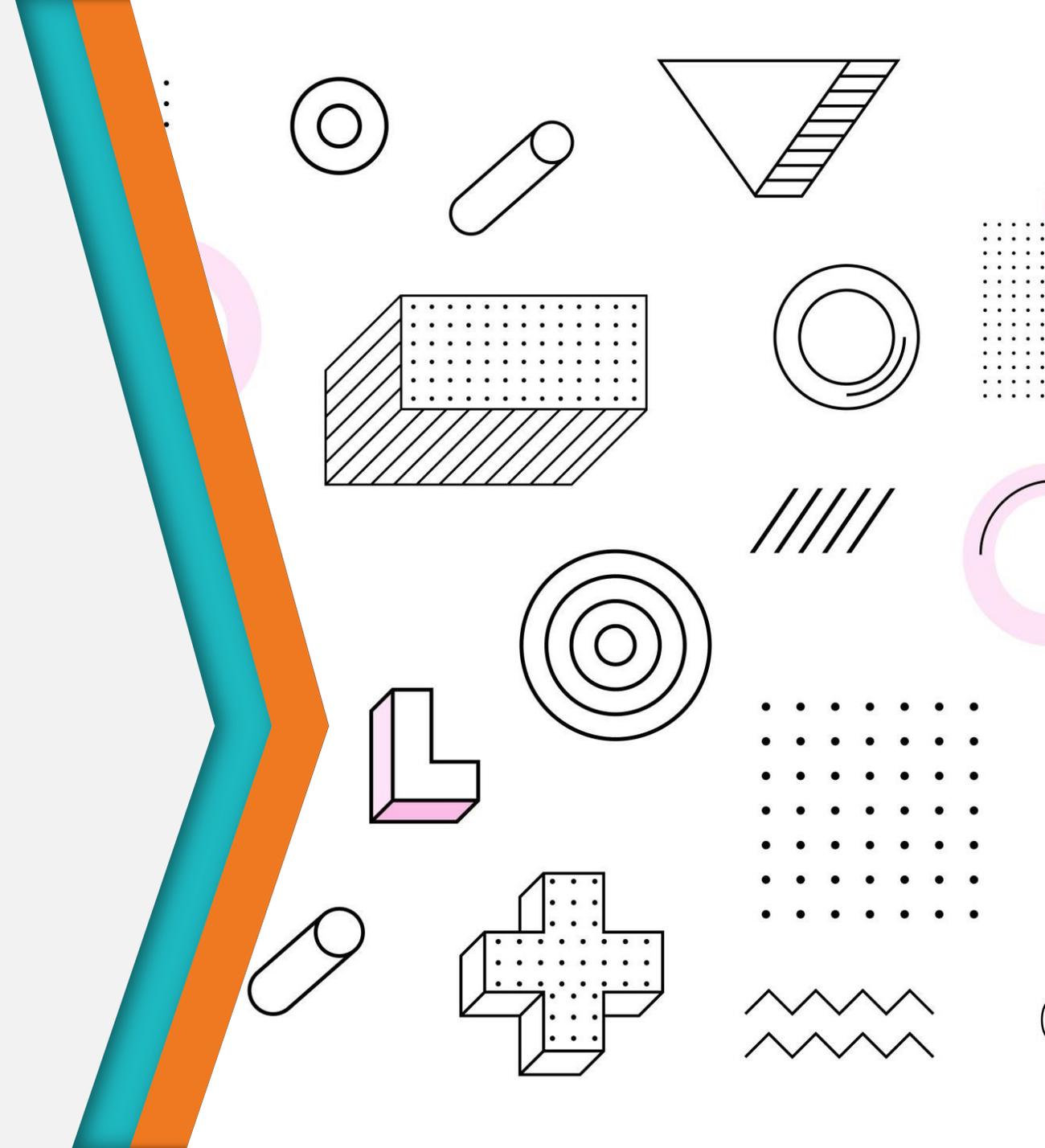
# Home Cooperation

Focus Urgency

V



- ❑ Raising awareness about child differences and uniqueness/ understanding that each child or adolescent perceives the world in a different way helps remove the resistance to accepting the child and the adolescence and finding ways to handle their feelings and actions.
- ❑ If parents notice certain negative feelings or actions, advising them to check if those feelings or actions could be the result of frustration is recommended. Frustration can be simply due to online learning, especially with those who do not like such modes, or who might not feel at ease with a teacher, who himself/herself is not at ease teaching, or might feel pressured to attain high scores. Social-emotional separation from friends and some dear people in the normal old manner (sitting together, rapport, sharing food and things, hugging, etc..), might be another hidden cause for frustration.



# Bridging/Closing Gaps – Awareness Sessions for Parents

## Key concerns for Parents

Boredom

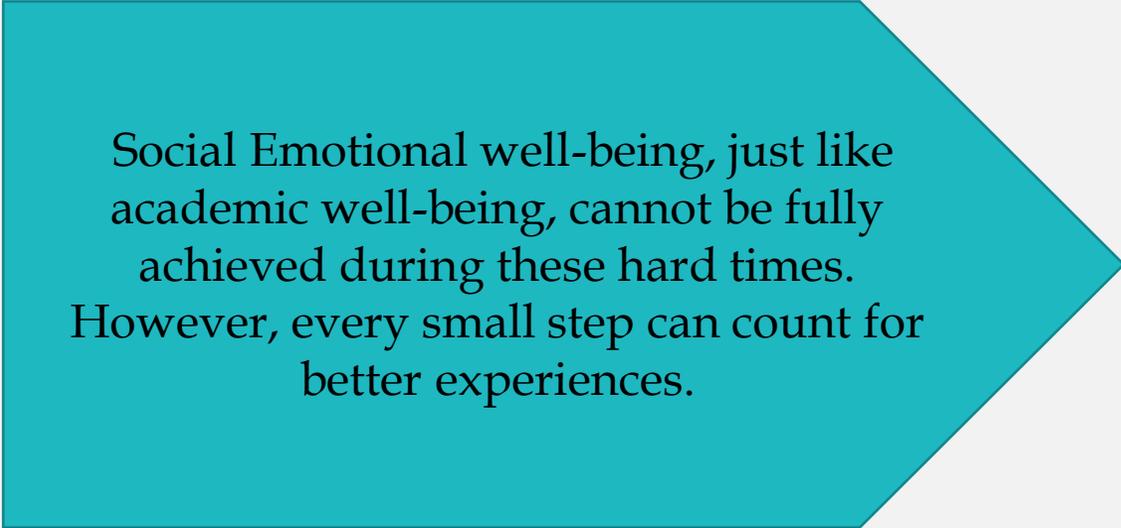
Academic Achievement

Anxiety

There is no guaranteed way for schools and teachers to do all the teaching and monitoring, and the learners doing all the learning on their own. Parents' role in this process has never been more needed than now.

We cannot expect that all parents have strategies, techniques, and tools to handle concerns. Being there for them through regularly- arranged awareness sessions is very helpful.

This November Issue will be handling “Boredom” – one of the major concerns for many parents. The other two will be handled in the upcoming issues.



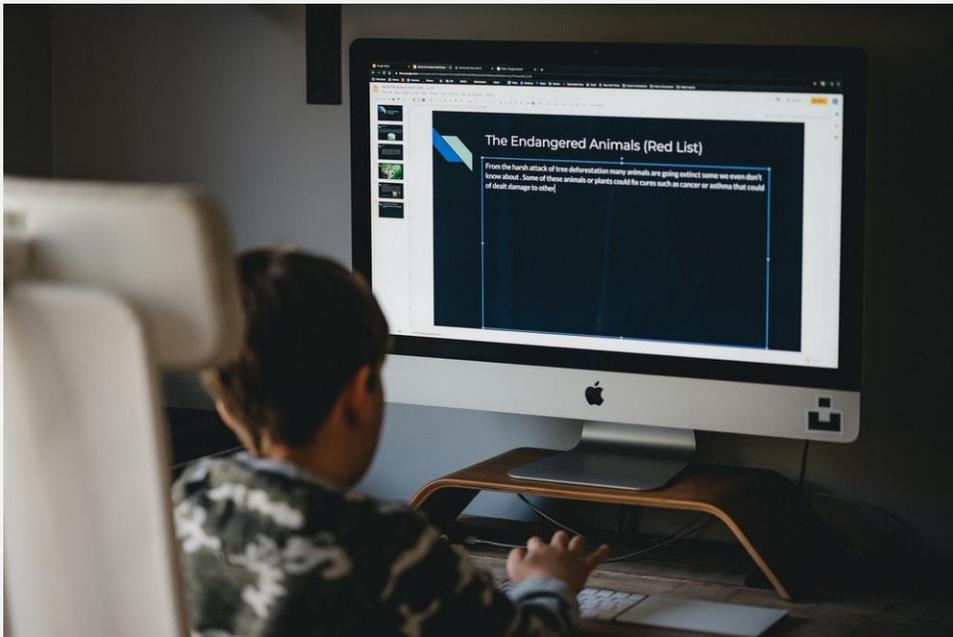
Social Emotional well-being, just like academic well-being, cannot be fully achieved during these hard times. However, every small step can count for better experiences.

# Social emotional support

Learner and teacher



# LEARNER



To better understand learners, it is important to study all their surroundings and structures (mind and emotion).

According to research, anxiety negatively influences the functioning of goal-oriented attention system. It decreases attention to goals and increases reaction to stimuli.

Situations of danger or unpleasant circumstances interfere in their attention capacity. For example, children may lose focus and attention when they think about their fears. These fears could be fear from scoring their work, not doing assignments, parents' reactions to their performance, teachers' reactions to their lack of engagement (which in many cases is the responsibility of the teacher, not the student) and so on. Children who are already facing challenges due to poverty or social-emotional pressures will most likely lose focus.

Like mentioned before in raising awareness of parents, teachers are encouraged to monitor learners, who are exhibiting negative feelings and actions. These could be triggered by frustration - being unable to manage learning online, separation anxiety, or feeling pressured by scores.

# TEACHER



Mental fatigue is a common complaint among teachers from all over the world. They are expected to juggle academics, administrative and counseling matters.

Grading assignments is adding more stress on teachers since it is not fully in class (fully online, or hybrid).

Setting the right routines helps organize teachers' work, which is indispensable for a stress-free day. These are the factors that teachers can control, so setting them upright will save them from struggling with the factors that they cannot control.

Taking rest or time-off to relax is essential to keep going with the same energy. Finding time to switch off all school communication and social media and enjoy family talk, music of choice, my-treat time, and other rest preferences recharges the body and the mind, even the heart.

Refraining from negative vibes, discouragement, predictive news, and any other external piece of information that can disrupt peace of mind is encouraged. This may not always be easy to do, but it is worth the effort.



*Autumn shows us  
how beautiful it is  
to let things go.*



... letting go of our  
old practices and  
exploring the new !  
NOW is the time !

**Manal Zeineddine**

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